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ABSTRACT

Findings of this self-evaluative study of secondary school teachers indicate that they are frequent school library users, coming primarily to acquire learning materials and to consult with the teacher-librarian. They do not, however, use the library as an alternative teaching space or use the teacher-librarian as a team teacher. Furthermore, the higher the ratio of teachers to teacher-librarians, the higher the dissatisfaction with the library. Teachers perceive only a limited curriculum role for the teacher-librarian, and appear to be unaware of the wide range of available library services. It is recommended that teacher-librarians work with school principals and their staffs to develop library objectives, programs, and evaluation procedures at both school and system level to improve library utilization. Further studies are required concerning library collections and services, curriculum served, staffing, and in-service education. Appendices include areas researched and a teacher survey. The bibliography lists 54 references. (FM)

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# TEACHER UTILIZATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL LIBRARIES

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## PREFACE

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## INTRODUCTION

> Directing learning experiences which actively involve students is a much more complex and demanding method of teaching than that which existed when teachers had only to impart knowledge which students passively learned. The job of teaching today is necessarily a co-operative one.
>
> (Branscombe and Newson, 1977:33)

Identifying and measuring the co-operative role which the school library has in the teaching-learning process has long been a concern of educators. Research has identified a number of factors which promote the relationship between the classroom and the library (see Appendix I). The most clearly identified factor, however, is the use which teachers make of the services and facilities (Blair, 1977).

A review of the literature reveals that the most frequently cited positive influence on teacher use of the school library is the relationship between the teacher and the teacher-librarian in the curriculum process. As the teacher-librarian becomes more involved in formal curriculum design, secondary school library use increases (Jay, 1970).

On the other hand, it has been proven to be a myth that only certain subject disciplines are appropriate to library utilization. Relatively even diffusion of services throughout most subject areas make it impossible to identify specific disciplines as contributing factors in library use (Stroud, 1976).

Another major variable affecting teacher use of the school library is the general level of their awareness of the library program through pre-service or in-service activities (Johnson, 1975). The literature points out that these activities are a significant factor in defining the co-operative role and in establishing viable communication links.

In light of these findings, the absence of baseline data on secondary school library use in the Carleton Board of Education and the need to develop suitable evaluation models, the Library Subject Council (OSSTF District 43) undertook in the Fall of 1977 to begin an investigation of teacher utilization of secondary school libraries under the Board's jurisdiction.

## PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

1. To measure the frequency of use by teachers of secondary school libraries under the jurisdiction of the Carleton Board of Education.
2. To investigate the types of use by teachers of secondary school libraries.
3. To identify factors which influence teacher use: teacher-librarian/ teacher ratio, subject discipline, awareness of services, and the role of teacher-librarians as perceived by teachers, in the curriculum process and instructional program.
4. To identify areas for further evaluation.

## DEFINITIONS

1. The Curriculum process - subject matter content, its organization and objectives in the program of studies offered by the school.
2. Frequency of use - the number of times per week that a teacher visits the secondary school library.
3. Instructional program - the factors, conditions, and techniques within a school that influence student learning.
4. Learning materials - all forms of print and non-print information.
5. Library program - those activities which integrate the library department with the school's curriculum process and instructional program.
6. Teacher - a secondary school staff member employed in a classroom, in student services or in administration at the building level.
7. Teacher-librarian - a staff member who has professional training in teaching and school librarianship.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

A questionnaire based on previous research was developed and administered in December 1977 to teachers in eleven of the thirteen secondary schools in the system (see Appendix II). The questionnaire

was pretested by a group of twelve secondary school teachers under the jurisdiction of a neighboring school board. A stratified sample of staff was developed for each school with one teacher selected at random from each subject department represented in that school. This approach was to ensure that all subject areas were represented and to include both users and non-users of the school library.

Due to sampling error, one school's returns had to be disregarded. In consequence, the results are based on 10 schools and 120 teacher respondents.

Lack of objectivity has been a continuing concern of the project team in two areas. First, even though self-evaluation is a recognized technique, the study was developed, administered, and analyzed by the teacher-librarians who have a professional stake in the results.

Second, the selection of the sample and administration of the questionnaire was completed by the head of the library department in each school. Some of those heads observed that classroom teachers responded to the questions in terms of how they thought the questions should be answered.

Finally, the results of the study are limited to the teaching activities of December 1977. Although they suggest general trends, a number of factors may have come into play since, which have changed teacher utilization of secondary school libraries.

## RESULTS

### 1. FREQUENCY OF USE

Although 85% of the secondary school teachers in this sample make at least one visit to the school library per week, the most frequent response is one to three visits (see Table 1). This frequency rate is higher than that measured in a number of other investigations (Johnson, 1975).

There are two major implications of this frequency rate. First, Carleton Secondary School teacher-librarians deal with a substantial portion of their school's teachers every week.

Table 1

Frequency of Teachers
(N = 120)

| # of visits per week | # of teachers | % of teachers |
|---|---|---|
| 0 | 18 | 15.0 |
| 1-3 | 76 | 63.3 |
| 4-6 | 16 | 13.3 |
| +6 | 10 | 8.3 |

Second, this heavy use suggests a high level of satisfaction with library services. When teachers are asked to rate their success in acquiring materials 83% "always" or "generally" find what they need (see Table 2). The sixteen least satisfied comprise part of the group who "never" visits the library. Alternatively there is a positive correlation between those who experience success in finding needed materials, and their frequency of use. This data indicates that library departments in these schools respond to teacher needs.

The frequency rate of teacher utilization, as measured by this research design, must be viewed, however, in light of the sampling procedures used. Although equally representative of all subject areas, the sample is underrepresentative of quantities of teachers in departments.

Table 2

Teacher Success In Acquiring Materials
(N = 120)

| level of success | # of teachers | % of teachers |
|---|---|---|
| never | 3 | 2.5 |
| sometimes | 13 | 10.8 |
| generally | 57 | 47.5 |
| always | 42 | 35.0 |
| invalid* | 5 | 4.2 |

*responses incomplete

## 2. TYPES OF USE

The most frequent reason for visiting the library is to acquire materials for a class presentation (see Table 3). Thirty out of forty-two responding "other" suggest that their visit is for some type of consultation with the teacher-librarian on matters relating to school program, student learning difficulties, professional resource needs, and as one teacher commented "for a quiet moment of reasoned reflection".

Thirty-six out of the same forty-two respondents note that they have been assigned supervision in the library. Although the assignment of teacher supervisors to the library may not be the best way to enhance the library program, it may increase teacher awareness and use of library services.

Table 3

Reasons of Teacher Use
(N = 120)

| | type | # of teachers selecting reason* | % of reasons selected |
|---|---|---|---|
| I | to acquire materials for a class presentation | 55 | 34.5 |
| II | other | 42 | 26.4 |
| III | to discuss a unit of study with a teacher-librarian | 23 | 14.5 |
| IV | to bring a class to the library | 21 | 13.2 |
| V | to discuss the need to purchase materials for your courses | 16 | 10.1 |
| VI | to bring a class to the library for instruction in research skills | 2 | 1.3 |

*teachers selected multiple responses

According to Table 3, items II, III, V, and VI (which make up over 50% of the reasons for visiting the library) represent situations in which the teacher-librarian and teacher must interface. This suggests that secondary school teacher-librarians in Carleton are actively accessible to teachers for direct one-to-one discussions.

In spite of 63 of 120 teachers responding that research skills are integrated with courses of study, only 2 bring their classes to the library for instruction. Although items IV and VI imply that the teacher-librarian will give the instruction, only 14.5% of the reasons for coming to the library center on formal instruction for the teachers' classes. It would appear that teacher-librarians, while utilized heavily in diverse consultative roles, are not fully exploited by classroom teachers in the specific role of a team teacher.

3. FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCE TEACHER USE

a) Teacher-librarian/Teacher Ratio

Table 4a indicates that the number of teacher-librarians does have

Table 4a

Teacher-librarian/non-User
Teacher Ratio
(N = 120)

| ratio of 1 teacher-librarian to | mean % of teacher non-users |
|---|---|
| 30 - 74 teachers | 12.4 |
| 75 - 120 teachers | 24.0 |

an impact on the number of teachers who are non-library users. In those schools where one teacher-librarian must serve 75 to 120 classroom teachers, the mean percentage of respondents who are non-library users is 24%. But in those schools where the ratio is one teacher-librarian for thirty to seventy-four teachers, the mean percentage of respondents who are non-users drops dramatically to 12.4%. Secondary school teachers in Carleton, who rely so heavily on individual consultation with teacher-librarians in their use of the library as outlined earlier, obviously utilize the school libraries more fully when the appropriate

quantities of professional staff are available.

An analysis of those 2 schools which have a ratio of 1 teacher-librarian to 75 to 120 teachers further reveals the impact of the teacher-librarian on teacher non-users. Table 4b illustrates that when less than a full-time teacher-librarian is assigned to the library department, there is an even greater non-user population, even when the total number of teachers is less than in a school with one full-time teacher-librarian.

Table 4b

Effects of Availability of Teacher-librarians on Teacher non-Users
(N = 120)

| school | ratio of teacher-librarians to teachers | mean % of teacher non-users |
|---|---|---|
| I | 1:112 | 23.1 |
| II | 5/6:69 | 25.0 |

b) Subject Departments

Table 5 indicates the relationship between the departments and the number of reasons for school library visits. It is evident that all subject areas are receiving some service from their school libraries even those traditionally not associated with libraries, such as Technology, Mathematics, and Guidance.

In Carleton, History teachers list the most reasons for using the library followed by those in Visual and Dramatic Arts, Language Arts, Modern Languages, and Family Studies. The non-users are similarly distributed across the various disciplines with the most frequent non-user department being Business Education.

Table 5

Rank Order Use of Libraries
by Subject Teachers

| department | mean # of reasons per teacher |
|---|---|
| History | 2.5 |
| Visual and Dramatic Arts | 2.0 |
| Language Arts | 1.8 |
| Modern Languages | 1.6 |
| Family Studies | 1.6 |
| Physical Education and Health | 1.5 |
| Geography | 1.5 |
| Vocational | 1.5 |
| Science | 1.4 |
| Technology | 1.3 |
| Business Education | 1.2 |
| Mathematics | 0.9 |
| Administration* | 0.8 |
| Guidance | 0.6 |
| Music | 0.5 |

*includes principals, vice-principals, and administrative heads

c) Awareness of Services

Included in the survey are questions (see Appendix II) designed to measure the teachers' perception of in-service training.

As outlined in Table 6a, most teachers perceive that they receive no in-service training from teacher-librarians at department meetings, department heads' meetings or at monthly staff meetings. Of the 120 teachers, 27.5% identify in-service training sessions as part of professional development days, which suggests that teacher-librarians are attempting to educate classroom teachers about learning materials and library programs. At the same time, 64.1% of the respondents perceive no such in-service training or do not know if it is offered.

Table 6a

Percentage of Teachers Who Perceive
In-Service Training
(N = 120)

| format for presentation | yes | no | don't know | invalid |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| department meetings | 9.2 | 65.0 | 16.7 | 9.2 |
| department heads' meetings | 14.2 | 44.2 | 32.5 | 9.2 |
| monthly staff meetings | 15.8 | 55.0 | 19.2 | 10.0 |
| professional activity | 27.5 | 35.8 | 28.3 | 8.3 |

Given that Carleton secondary school teachers are such heavy library users, and given that they do not perceive in-service training as being available to them, how and when do they learn about the services of school libraries?

Table 6b points out some of the areas in which teachers perceive in-service has taken place. Almost 50% of the respondents recognize instruction in library use while 32.5% have assistance with developing selection and evaluation techniques for learning materials. About half of this number participate in programs on production use and handling of audio-visual materials. A significant number of respondents in all four categories appear to be ignorant of all activities.

Table 6b

Percentage of Teachers Who Perceive
Types of In-Service Programs
(N = 120)

| type | yes | no | don't know | invalid |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| how to use the library | 49.2 | 10.0 | 28.3 | 12.5 |
| production of audio-visual materials | 20.0 | 27.5 | 37.5 | 15.0 |
| audio-visual use and handling | 23.3 | 22.5 | 39.2 | 15.0 |
| selection and evaluation of learning materials | 32.5 | 15.8 | 35.8 | 15.8 |

Furthermore, there is evidence of a communication breakdown when universally offered and traditionally recognized services, such as the preparation of bibliographies, are identified by only 62% of the

respondents (see Table 6c).

Table 6c

Percentage of Teachers Who Perceive
Traditional Library Services
(N = 120)

| service | yes | no | don't know | invalid |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| acquisition awareness | 80.8 | 7.5 | 10.8 | 0.8 |
| bibliographies | 62.5 | 9.2 | 26.7 | 1.7 |

d) Role of the Teacher-librarian in the Curriculum Process and Instructional Program

For purposes of this investigation, the curriculum process is viewed as four steps: planning (including formulating objectives), design of instructional activities (including selection of learning materials), implementation, and evaluation. It is a major aim of this project to measure the degree to which teachers perceive the teacher-librarians' involvement at each of these stages.

Table 7

Percentage of Teachers Who Perceive
Teacher-librarians in the Curriculum Process
(N = 120)

| stage | yes | no | don't know | invalid |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| planning | 20.8 | 25.8 | 48.3 | 5.0 |
| design | 48.3 | 12.5 | 34.2 | 5.0 |
| implementation | 73.3 | 8.3 | 15.0 | 3.3 |
| evaluation | 12.5 | 29.3 | 52.5 | 5.8 |

A very clear picture of the entry and exit points of the teacher-librarian in the curriculum process, as perceived by teachers, is revealed in Table 7. Teacher-librarians are viewed as being only 21% effective at the planning stage, 48% effective at the design stage, 73% effective at the implementation stage, and only 13% effective at the evaluation stage. The most telling response is that teachers simply do not know whether or not librarians have any involvement at any stage.

On examination of the more positive responses in the design and implementation stages, it is discovered that the role for teacher-librarians is perceived to be a narrow one of selecting and organizing learning materials. As outlined earlier in the paper, teachers do not expect teacher-librarians to provide direct instruction for their students.

Evaluation is not recognized as part of the expertise of teacher-librarians even in those areas traditionally associated with librarianship.

Teachers report that the library department provides group and individual student instruction (see Table 8). Even though research skills are an integrated part of 63% of school courses and that teachers report that the library department provides group and individual student instruction, only 14% of the respondents bring their classes to the library for that purpose.

Table 8

Percentage of Teachers Who Perceive Teacher-librarian Involvement in Instruction (N = 120)

| mode of instruction | yes | no | don't know | invalid |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| group | 80.0 | 3.3 | 15.0 | 1.6 |
| individual | 74.2 | 0.0 | 25.0 | 0.8 |

Some caution must be exercised in the understanding of the results of this inquiry. Write-in comments indicate that the teachers found the use of terms such as "curriculum process" to have little to do with their daily teaching. A comment such as "surely curriculum is a function of the Ministry of Education and the Board consultants" is typical of the thirty-one respondents who added information.

## CONCLUSIONS

Secondary school teachers in the Carleton system are frequent school library users, coming primarily to acquire learning materials and to consult with the teacher-librarian. But they do not use the

library as an alternative teaching space or use the teacher-librarian as a team teacher. The higher the ratio of teachers to teacher-librarians, the higher the dissatisfaction with the library. All subject areas recognize some degree of assistance.

Teachers perceive that teacher-librarians are involved in the curriculum process and the instructional program in a limited way. They see the library departments in Carleton providing traditional services such as selection and organization of learning material. They are not aware, however, of the role which teacher-librarians may play in setting objectives, instructing students or evaluating student work. Jetter (1972) in attempting to identify the role of teacher-librarians in the future concluded that "the school library media specialist of the future . . . . will function as an instructional development specialist". If that is the role which teacher-librarians in Carleton want to develop in the next few years, new objectives for library, school, and system level programs will have to be created.

One way in which teachers are apprised of the library potential is through in-service training activities. Teachers do not appear to be aware of the library through these activities. Further, many teachers are unfamiliar even with universal services. On-going and dynamic communication must be maintained by secondary school library departments if teachers are to exploit effectively the services of the library program and the skills of the teacher-librarian.

In Secondary Schools in the Carleton Board of Education, there is a co-operative relationship between the classroom and the library. But it is based on individual consultation between teacher-librarian and teacher, and centering largely on those functions which are traditionally associated with school libraries. If, however, maximum benefit for the student is to be derived from the expertise of teacher-librarians and library services, increased awareness of this potential is necessary.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That teacher-librarians use the results of these findings and those of a needs-assessment process; and in consultation with their

principals and central office staff, develop objectives for library programs at both the school and system level.

2. That teacher-librarians in consultation with their principals and central office staff develop programs to implement those objectives at both school and system levels.
3. That teacher-librarians in consultation with their principals and central office staff establish an evaluation process in order to assess the success in meeting these objectives.

AREAS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. That further studies be conducted to evaluate the relationship between teacher utilization of school libraries and:
   i) the size and quality of the library collection
   ii) the number and quality of library services
   iii) the nature of the curriculum served
   iv) the nature of the teaching strategies
   v) the quantity and quality of the library department staff
   vi) the nature of in-service education for teachers
2. That data collected during this investigation on student use of libraries be updated and analyzed.
3. That some attempt be made to develop an instrument for evaluation of the relationship of secondary school teacher-librarians and the curriculum process in the Carleton Board of Education.

## APPENDIX I

## TYPES OF RESEARCH

1. Attributes of students:

   age, sex, I.Q., socioeconomic background, reading interests, grade level, achievement score, library use instruction, peer pressure, career aspirations

2. Attributes of teachers:

   age, sex, level of education, number of years teaching experience, training in using media and school libraries, perception of the school library, media and school librarian, in-service training

3. Attributes of teacher-librarian:

   age, sex, level of education, number of years teaching experience, positive relationship with students, self confidence, their perception of role

4. Nature of the subject discipline:

5. Quantitative factors:

   physical quarters, funding, number of library staff, number of volumes, number of services offered

6. Library atmosphere:

   display of materials, furniture arrangement, library discipline, communication techniques

Leading edge

7. Role of principal:

   (see attributes of teachers), leadership qualities, innovative curriculum plans, communication skills

8. Role of senior Board level staff and district services:

   funding, number of centralized library services, curriculum innovation

9. Role of Ministry of Education:

   (see role of senior Board level staff), curriculum guidelines, E.G. HS 1

10. Availability of information and leisure materials from other sources:

11. Attributes of the information source:

12. Attributes of curriculum design and instructional program:

    personalized learning, interdisciplinary studies, team teaching, contract teaching, independent study programs, writing and research program

## APPENDIX II

## SECONDARY SCHOOL LIBRARY SUBJECT COUNCIL

## O.S.S.T.F. DISTRICT 43

### TEACHER SURVEY

Department:_____ Number of Years Teaching:_____

1. How many times have you been to the school library in in the last week?

| | |
|---|---|
| 0 | ( ) |
| 1-3 | ( ) |
| 4-6 | ( ) |
| More than 6 | ( ) visits. |

2. Why? (Check more than one if applicable.)

| | |
|---|---|
| a) to acquire materials for a class presentation | ( ) |
| b) to discuss a unit of study with a teacher-librarian | ( ) |
| c) to bring a class to the library | ( ) |
| d) to bring a class to the library for instruction in research skills | ( ) |
| e) to discuss the need to purchase materials for your courses | ( ) |
| f) other (be specific) | ( ) |

3. Have you been successful in acquiring materials through the school library?

| | |
|---|---|
| Never | ( ) |
| Sometimes | ( ) |
| Generally | ( ) |
| Always | ( ) |

| | YES | NO | DON'T KNOW |
|---|---|---|---|
| 4. Does the library regularly inform teachers of new materials? | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| 5. Does the library prepare lists of materials for school courses? | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| 6. Is research skills instruction integrated with your courses of study? | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |

| | YES | NO | DON'T KNOW |
|---|---|---|---|
| 7. Does the school library provide a collection of selected materials for your use - | | | |
| a) in the school library? | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| b) in the classroom? | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| 8. Does the library provide group instruction in library services? | | | |
| a) introduction to the library | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| b) types and use of reference materials | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| c) research skills (e.g. how to use the card catalog) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| d) audio-visual equipment use and handling | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| e) production of audio-visual materials (e.g. making an original slide/sound presentation) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| 9. Does the library provide instruction for individual users in the use of library materials? | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| 10. When the school library conducts in-service instruction for you does it include the development of proficiency in - | | | |
| a) how to use the library | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| b) production of audio-visual materials | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| c) audio-visual equipment use and handling | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| d) selection and evaluation of books, periodicals and audio-visual materials for student use | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| e) other (be specific) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| 11. Does the school library provide consultation to individual teachers - | | | |
| a) on the selection of materials (e.g. textbooks, workbooks, audio-visual equipment) for teaching units | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| b) on professional teaching and curriculum materials for use by the teacher in planning units | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| c) on the design of curriculum units | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| d) on evaluation of student learning | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |

| | YES | NO | DON'T KNOW |
|---|---|---|---|
| 12. In what does the school library assist with the evaluation of student work? | | | |
| a) visits by the teacher-librarian to your classroom to view student seminars and oral presentations | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| b) marking (by the teacher-librarian) of essays for use of correct bibliographic style and research techniques | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| c) marking by the teacher-librarian of research oriented assignments (e.g. Grade 13 geography exercises on using statistical data) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| 13. Does the teacher-librarian regularly meet to present new materials, ideas about developing research skills, etc. - | | | |
| a) at your department meetings | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| b) at your department head meetings | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| c) at your monthly staff meetings | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| d) at professional activity days | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| 14. Does the library assist you - | | | |
| a) in acquiring materials for university courses | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| b) by providing access to material through inter-library loan | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| c) by recommending leisure reading | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |
| d) other (be specific) | ( ) | ( ) | ( ) |

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